

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order following the remarks of Senator ISAKSON of Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Georgia.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KEITH HATCHER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise on a point of personal privilege to commend a gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Keith Hatcher.

Twenty-five years ago, when I worked with my father—my father, among other things, was the past president of the Georgia Association of REALTORS. I remember one afternoon he came into my office and said: Son, we just hired someone today who is going to be special. His name is Keith Hatcher. I want you to be sure and look him up the first time you get a chance.

Well, about a week later I met Keith. I was then a member of the Georgia Legislature, and I showed him around a little bit. He became the assistant to John Cox, who had been the venerable representative of the REALTORS for years in that State. I saw that spark in Keith Hatcher's eye, and I knew he was going to be a great one, and a great one he has been.

In his 25 years representing the Georgia association and landowners and homeowners around our State, he has fought hard for limitations and curbs on the power of eminent domain, fought hard for lower ad valorem taxes and transfer taxes, and fought hard for reform of landlord-tenant laws. He has worked day in and day out for the landowners of our State and for the REALTORS of our State, and he has done it in the most professional, comprehensive way anybody could possibly do it.

He has another great story to tell. Keith faced a significant health hazard just a few years ago. He was about to lose a kidney, and he could have lost his life, but he went through a transplant program in Birmingham, AL. The transplant was successful, and he rehabilitated himself. Today, he works as hard as he did before the injury. Importantly, as well, he works as a member of the board of the National Kidney Foundation helping to raise money to support the transplant program so others who are afflicted as he was will have the same cure he has had.

So this week, as the REALTORS from Georgia come to town, as I think they will from every other State of the Union, to talk to the Members of the Senate about laws that affect their industry and their profession, the one from Georgia will be led by Keith Hatcher. As he has for the last 24 years, he will be a voice for home ownership, a voice for lower taxation, and a voice for wide distribution and ownership of

land, which makes the United States of America the most unique country of any on the face of this Earth.

I am pleased to commend him today on the celebration of his 25th anniversary representing the Georgia Association of REALTORS.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROFIT OVER HEALTH

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, yesterday across this country, we celebrated Mother's Day, marking the contribution of mothers across our country. But 2 months ago, the health of tens of thousands of expectant mothers and their unborn children was threatened by a drug company putting profit over public health. Two months ago, there was justified public outrage that the cost of a drug hormone, progesterone, to prevent premature births went from approximately \$10 a dose—20 doses are needed through the course of a pregnancy—to \$1,500 per dose. The entire course of the 20-week treatment, therefore, was about \$200 three months ago. Two months ago, it went to \$30,000—\$200 to \$30,000.

This was once an affordable, common treatment to help women facing high-risk labor. I visited Toledo Children's Hospital, MetroHealth in Cleveland, and St. Elizabeth's Health Center in Youngstown to hear directly from patients and physicians and hospital executives about how the outrageous price increase affects them. Patients explained what it was like to overcome a previous miscarriage and rely on this progesterone to carry to full term today. Physicians and public health advocates explained the risk to women and children's health if the therapy were no longer affordable and accessible. Hospital administrators and State Medicaid directors worried what such an exorbitant increase would mean to already-stretched budgets.

Meanwhile, several colleagues and I began to ask questions about how and why the increase happened in the first place. We are concerned about how companies, private companies, abuse the FDA approval process or manipulate existing rules to shortchange consumers while those companies reap massive windfall profits. That is especially so because, in addition to affixing such a high cost to the drug, this company, KV Pharmaceuticals from St. Louis, sent a letter threatening a cease and desist order to compounding pharmacies—those pharmacies that actually make their own progesterone, in this case—a cease and desist order to prevent these phar-

macies from producing it, further solidifying KV Pharmaceutical's monopolization in the marketplace. All the while, pregnant women are left without the critical medicine their doctors prescribe for them, and either taxpayers foot the bill, insurance companies foot the bill, driving the price up, or women simply do without, increasing the number of miscarriages, increasing the number of low-birth-weight babies, increasing the cost to taxpayers, and increasing the heartache in mother after mother and father after father.

Fortunately, in an unusual response—unusual in the sense that this case was so dramatically outrageous and unbelievably greedy on the part of KV Pharmaceutical executives—the FDA did something it doesn't normally do: It asserted its authority and made clear it would not enforce the cease and desist order. What was KV's response after the public outrage, after the refusal to enforce the cease and desist order, therefore allowing the pharmacies to keep producing the progesterone? It reduced the price from \$1,500 a dose—remember, it was \$10 per dose as recently as 3 months ago. They take a shot every week for 20 weeks during the pregnancy. It was \$10 a dose, and they raised it to \$1,500. But do you know what they did after the FDA and a small number of Democratic Senator's pushed them, embarrassed them in public? They brought the price down to \$690 a dose. It went from \$10 when compounding pharmacies were doing it, to \$1,500 when they thought they could get away with it, to \$690—as if they thought they were doing America's women a favor. That means instead of it being \$30,000 for the whole cost of the pharmaceutical, the 20 doses, it would be about \$15,000. What a bargain. On top of that, they did what companies whose hands are caught in the cookie jar always do: They hired high-powered Washington, DC, lobbyists to fight for their rights, this exclusivity for this drug, trying to prohibit the critical work of compounding pharmacists.

I agree with drug companies; generally they need to recoup their investment. I want America's drug companies to do the boldest, most innovative, most progressive research in the world, and I want them to make a profit doing it so they can afford to do it and keep doing it. They should reflect the amount of R&D to bring drugs to market, the cost of their manufacture, the cost of their distribution, but in the case of this progesterone, the case of this pharmacy compound, taxpayers—in this case, through the National Institutes of Health—funded the initial research and continue to fund critical research on premature births. KV Pharmaceutical didn't do the research; they bought the exclusive rights to a monopoly by reimbursing another company—contracting with them—I believe that actually conducted the clinical trials and incurring the costs needed for FDA approval.